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RUEHBK/AMEMBASSY BANGKOK 7713
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E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/16/2016
TAGS: [KCRM](#) [SNAR](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [BG](#)
SUBJECT: NARCOTICS ARREST: BIG FISH FOR LAW AND ORDER?

REF: A. DHAKA 1464

[1](#)B. DHAKA 02296

Classified By: Economic Chief David Renz; reason para 1.4(d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: The recent arrest of a prominent businessmen led to the BDG pronouncement of success against heroin traffickers in the country. The chairman of a large food export company is the government's "big fish" in the case, despite his arrest being based solely on the confessions of jailed smugglers. The amount of government and media attention given to this case is remarkable, given the usual reluctance to recognize a drug problem in the country. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (U) Local media has made much ado about the efforts of the BDG to catch the individuals responsible for heroin trafficked to the UK in 2005, ever since a report on the case was released last month (reftel). They have followed the case hungrily as the Police took over for Customs for the criminal investigation, resulting this week in the arrest of the Chairman of BD Foods, Badruddoza Chowdhury Momen.

[1](#)3. (C) The BDG is taking an uncharacteristically comprehensive approach towards the investigation. A special probe team was set up within the Home Ministry to track the case and prepare it for criminal prosecution. Press reports paraphrase Home Minister Babar by saying, "the government's achievements in this particular case will definitely restore the country's image."

[1](#)4. (C) It was thought that Badruddoza and his company had been exonerated by the Customs report, which blamed former employees for using company information to ship drugs. The arrest of the chairman came as a bit of a surprise. Embassy staff spoke with the head of the probe team in the case, Special Police Super Ibrahim Fatemi. He confirmed that Badruddoza's arrest was based solely on the confessional statements of two incarcerated smugglers, former BD Foods employee Nazmul Haider Buyiyan Bulbul and his accomplice Mokhlesur Rahman Nayan. Fatemi noted that Police are in hot pursuit of actual hard evidence in the case.

[1](#)5. (C) Comment: It could be that the BDG focus on this case is the result of overall efforts to increase the

perception of law and order. UK initiation of the investigation is also likely to have strong-armed the government into decisive action. However, rumors persist that competing food export companies or other vested interests may be targeting BD Foods. End Comment.
CHAMMAS